

ACM SIGMOD/PODS 2024 Conference: Chile stands out as host of global data science event

- For six days, Santiago brought together 684 scientists and data management experts from around the world. Of the total attendees, 10% were Latin American, and more than half of them were Chilean.
- Among them, the presence of Ioana Manolescu and Pierre Senellart, two renowned researchers from the French National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology, stood out.

Santiago, Chile - June 2024. For the first time in its history, the most prestigious international conference in data science, ACM SIGMOD/PODS, was held in Latin America, with Chile as the host country. This event, led by Nayat Sánchez-Pi, director of Inria Chile, and Pablo Barceló, director of the Institute of Mathematical Engineering and Computational Science of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (IMC-UC) and researcher of the Millennium Institute for Foundational Research on Data (IMFD) and the National Center for Artificial Intelligence (Cenia), brought together nearly 700 scientists, students, and experts to address the challenges of managing large volumes of data.

Santiago, global center of data management for a week

Nayat Sánchez-Pi, CEO of Inria Chile and general chair of the conference, explained that "for the first time, we have managed to bring this prestigious conference to Latin America, marking a significant milestone in its 50 years of history. It has been an honor to be part of the organizing committee, not only for bringing this conference to our region, but specifically to Chile. The organization of such a large event is always challenging, especially as it is a SIGMOD PODS conference, which brings together almost a thousand participants every year."

On the other hand, Pablo Barceló, director of the Institute of Mathematical Engineering and Computational Science at PUC and co-director of the local organizing committee, highlighted the significant presence of the Chilean community in this event over the decades. "Chile was chosen for its constant contribution and prestige in data science, with several internationally recognized local researchers," said Barceló.

The technical program of SIGMOD/PODS was loaded with talks, workshops, demo sessions, posters, and industrial and scientific sessions. For six days, Santiago became the global center of data science, with the participation of renowned researchers, both local and international. Among them, the presence of Ioana Manolescu and Pierre Senellart, two renowned researchers of the French National Institute for Research in Digital Sciences and Technologies (Inria), stood out.

Security and Artificial Intelligence: Key Challenges in Data Management

Ioana Manolescu, senior researcher at the Inria Saclay Centre in France and co-chair of the SIGMOD demonstrations at the conference, stated about her experience in Santiago that "I had the pleasure of being a *'Demonstration Coach'* this year, and the SIGMOD Demonstration Program is very interesting, as it has a high variety of topics that are addressed by the systems that people have shown in their presentations."

At the conference, Ioana Manolescu highlighted the importance and diversity of the research presented, focusing particularly on the progress in the fields of security and artificial intelligence. In this regard, the Inria researcher emphasized two key areas: first, Secure MultiParty Computation (MPC), a protocol that allows different entities to collaborate in the calculation of a joint result without revealing their individual data, an approach that is crucial in sectors such as finance or health, where privacy is paramount.

Secondly, she highlighted the studies that incorporate tools such as ChatGPT for functions such as database queries or evaluations of artistic objects, demonstrating how artificial intelligence can handle tasks that traditionally required human intervention.

Strengthening the Latin American and Chilean Digital Ecosystem

The conference underscored the urgency of developing research in artificial intelligence and data management in a responsible manner, addressing the risks and biases inherent in the use of large volumes of information. Many of the works presented at SIGMOD/PODS focused on these challenges, both from a theoretical and applied perspective.

"SIGMOD/PODS 2024 in Santiago was a conference where the entire data community came together, as well as other research actors from other areas, such as artificial intelligence. In this context, Latin America is a region that is increasingly positioning itself in these matters, particularly Chile," said Sánchez-Pi.

About Inria Chile

Inria is the French National Institute for Research in Digital Sciences and Technologies and is the executive arm of the French Government for the country's digital sovereignty. Among its responsibilities is the coordination of the research component of France's National Strategy in Artificial Intelligence, the management of the Paris center of expertise of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), and it is in charge of the Digital Program and Software Agency of France, which reinforces its role as a leader and coordinator of scientific and technological research in digital sciences and technologies in France.

In Chile, where Inria decided to establish its only center outside of France 12 years ago, it has collaborated with more than 750 researchers and 330 Chilean and international institutions, developing more than 200 R&D projects. Inria Chile is the operator of the Franco-Chilean relationship in digital sciences and artificial intelligence. It is supported by France through Inria and by Chile through the National Agency for Research and Development of Chile, ANID.



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